



TRANSPORTATION SAFETY COMMISSION

CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

TO: Transportation Safety Commission Members, Council members, City Manager Kurt Hodgen, Assistant City Manager Evan Vass

FROM: Thanh H. Dang, Public Works Planner

DATE: October 12, 2009

RE: Transportation Safety Commission Minutes for October 6, 2009

The Transportation Safety Commission met on Tuesday October 6, at the Department of Planning & Community Development, 409 S Main Street.

Members and Advisory Members present included: Bill Blessing (chair), Len VanWyk (citizen), Doug Stader (DMV), Officer Greg Deeds (police), Sgt. Felicia Glick (Sherrif's Office), Drew Williams (public works), Thanh Dang (public works).

Guests Present include: None.

Citizens are always provided the opportunity to voice their views/concerns about any item before the commission. It is the policy of the Commission to move the agenda item to the beginning of the meeting when citizens attend Commission meetings to avoid detaining citizens for the entire meeting. However, any citizen is welcome to stay for the entire meeting.

Welcome

Old Business

1. Franklin & Ott St - Update

Public Works Department has collected traffic count data at the intersection of Franklin & Ott Sts. Public Works staff is currently processing data and will share results with the Commission at next month's meeting.

2. Kelly St - Update

Ms. Dang presented to the Commission data provided by Sgt. Keller for a stealth (speed) survey on Kelly St. The stealth survey device was placed at the 300 block of Kelly St from September 15 through September 18 and indicated that the 85th percentile speed was 29 mph, which is within an acceptable range. It is generally the Police Department's policy only to provide regular radar enforcement on a street when the 85th percentile speed is 10 mph greater than the posted speed limit. The posted speed limit on Kelly St is 25 mph.

Ms. Dang reminded the Commission that the Northeast Neighborhood had begun a petition last year for consideration of enrollment into the Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program.

3. Grace & High St.

Mr. Eshelman was not present at the meeting to share with the Commission the results of his survey of student crossing habits at S. Main St. Mr. Eshelman will present his findings at next month's meeting.

Mr. VanWyk suggested that the crosswalks be considered on both the north and south side of the intersection, as opposed to only on one side.

New Business

4. Main St & Pointe Dr.

Ms. Dang presented that a citizen requested that a new traffic signal be installed at the intersection of S. Main St & Pointe Dr. Public Works staff have conducted a traffic count at this intersection and are currently processing the data for inclusion in the Traffic Signal Warrant Study. Study results will be presented at the next Commission meeting.

5. Port Republic Rd between Bluestone Dr. and Neff Ave.

At the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) meeting in August, City Manager Kurt Hodgen asked the HRMPO Policy Board consider funding a study of Port Republic Rd. At that meeting the study limits were considered between S. Main St., in the city, and Shen Lake Dr, in Rockingham County. The HRMPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met in August to develop a preliminary scope of work which will be further discussed by the HRMPO, city, county, and JMU.

Mr. Williams and Ms. Dang shared with the Commission an overview of ideas and concepts which city staff developed and shared at a September meeting with JMU staff (including Dr. Linwood Rose and Charlie King). Public Works staff recommends that funding goes towards making physical improvements (described below) and program improvements (ex. increase transit ridership) and not an additional study of the corridor. Traffic signals are continually being optimized by the Public Works' Transportation Management Program staff. Some physical improvements that have been suggested by JMU and city staff include:

- Construct an additional 5th lane for only Transit Buses and HOV-3/4 travel towards campus,

- Construct “jug-handles” to eliminate left turn traffic at the interstate ramps,
- Relocate Forest Hills Rd. to opposite of Hunters Rd. which will result in the removal of one existing traffic light and installation of a new traffic light at the new intersection making left turns out of Hunters Rd safer
- Constructing a new connection between Hunters Rd. with Devon Ln.
- Constructing a new connection between Village Ln. and Sully Dr.

Mr. VanWyk suggested that HOV lanes be created from existing travel lanes and voiced opposition to the construction of additional lanes because it will continue to encourage JMU students to drive. Mr. Blessing liked the proposals for enhancing safety by eliminating uncontrolled left turns.

Additional comments and suggestions from Commission members are welcome. Please direct them to either Mr. Williams or Ms. Dang.

Announcements

6. Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan & Public Input – comments by October 16th

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Plans Public Input Meeting was held on September 29 and was well attended. 27 written comments were received at the meeting and emailed comments continue to come to Public Works. Comments will be reviewed and shared with the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plans Advisory Committee at their October 19th meeting and the draft plans will be updated.

To review a draft of the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plans, visit www.harrisonburgva.gov/bikeped. Comments to the draft plan should be submitted by October 16th, to Ms. Thanh Dang at thanhd@harrisonburgva.gov or at Harrisonburg Public Works , 320 E. Mosby Rd, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

7. International Walk to School Week & Safe Routes to School

Sgt. Glick announced that the week of October 5th is International Walk to School Week. Walk to School Days was celebrated at Waterman Elementary, Spottswood Elementary, Skyline Middle School, Kiester Elementary school and Mountain View Elementary (county).

Ms. Dang provided an update of the Safe Routes to School – Keister Grant/Project. New sidewalks on South Ave., Central Ave., and Maryland Ave. are currently under design by the city engineer’s office and construction is anticipated to begin in Spring 2010. City staff is beginning to contact property owners about right-of-way and temporary construction easements required for the project. The city is requesting that property owners donate right-of-way and temporary construction easements.

Mr. VanWyk suggested that city staff consider narrowing the street width of South Ave. west of S. High St.

8. Street Smart at Harrisonburg HS

Mr. Stader noted that “Street Smart” a campaign/presentation against under aged drinking, sponsored by Budweiser, was at Harrisonburg HS and appeared to be effective.

9. Future Presentations

Officer Deeds offered to present the new Portable Speed Display at the next Commission meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:15am.

NEXT MEETING TUESDAY November 10, 2009 AT 8:30AM at Community Development Classroom, 409 S Main Street.